

country. It has been such an honor to work with you to extend funding for community health centers and to expand access to care and resources to families living with Alzheimer's disease. And millions of Americans have you to thank for a timely vote to save the Affordable Care Act and their healthcare.

Doug, you know what really matters: pursuing justice, expanding opportunity, and simply making life better for the people who sent us here.

Three days after those beautiful young girls were killed, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered their eulogy. In it, he said this: “(Their deaths) say to each of us, black and white alike, that we must substitute courage for caution.

“They say to us that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered them, but about the system, the way of life, the philosophy which produced the murderers.

“Their death says to us that we must work passionately and unrelentingly for the realization of the American dream.”

Doug, you might not know yet what your future holds, but you have been working passionately and unrelentingly for the realization of the American dream for your entire career. I have absolutely no doubt that in whatever you do next, Doug, you will continue to be a tireless advocate for justice and equality.

Thank you for who you are. It has been such an honor serving with you.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, today I rise to honor my dear friend and colleague, Senator DOUG JONES of Alabama.

DOUG JONES is fearless. He cuts against the grain, shrugging off critics to chart his own path rooted in deeply held principles of justice, virtue, and equality. After law enforcement had failed to prosecute civil rights cases for decades, DOUG JONES successfully brought a measure of justice to the families of the four girls killed in the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing. When skeptics claimed there was no chance of him winning a Senate race in Alabama, DOUG JONES stayed the course and clinched an upset victory. And despite having seen some of his own colleagues shy away from addressing controversial issues in this Chamber, DOUG JONES stood up for what he knew was right, from his very first speech in the Senate when he delivered a moving address on the threat of gun violence.

But despite his tenacity, Senator JONES has never stopped leading with compassion—compassion for his colleagues, compassion for the people of Alabama, and compassion for all Americans. Like his personal role model, Atticus Finch, Senator JONES abides by the principle that in order to know someone else truly and fully, you need to “climb in his skin and walk around in it.” And it is that empathy that has led Senator JONES to champion unity

over division. My seat is near DOUG's here on the Senate floor, and we sat together during the impeachment trial. Even during one of the darkest moments in our country's history, DOUG maintained faith in our better angels. When the trial of the President came to a close, Senator JONES issued a call for unity, saying, “We must find a way to come together, to set aside partisan differences, and to focus on what we have in common as Americans.” He looked forward, past the tension consuming Washington and toward brighter days ahead. That is DOUG. That is how he works.

From the time I chaired the DSCC during then-Candidate JONES' run for Senate in Alabama, to our years together in this Chamber, I have always admired his desire to put country first, follow his conscience, and value principle over politics. He is a man of enormous integrity—someone who never forgot who sent him to the Senate, someone who always worked to get results, and someone who achieved more in just a few years than many Senators do in multiple terms.

I was proud to work with Senator JONES on the passage of the FUTURE Act, which provided permanent funding for historically Black colleges and universities. His commitment to that cause has directly benefitted the four proud HBCUs in my State of Maryland, and the bill is a step forward in the fight for equity in higher education. I am also grateful for Senator JONES's work to end the military widow's tax, which prevented military spouses from receiving the full benefits they deserved. Senator JONES was a champion for the widows who had lived for too long with broken promises. He was principled, persistent, and got the job done.

DOUG JONES is a model public servant, someone the American people can look up to and admire. His absence will be deeply felt in the U.S. Senate, but I know that just because he will depart the Nation's Capital on January 3 doesn't mean his role in this fight is over. Service is in his bones, plain and simple. It has been a profound honor and privilege to serve alongside him. Thank you, DOUG—thank you for all you have done for our country, and I want to extend my warmest thoughts and wishes to you, your wife Louise, your three children, and your grandchildren on behalf of a deeply grateful nation.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize and thank Senator DOUG JONES for his service in the U.S. Senate and to the people of Alabama. In just 2 years, Senator JONES has become a respected voice in the Senate and built a reputation as someone who puts the interests of his constituents before partisanship or ideology. It has been a privilege working alongside him during the 116th Congress.

Senator JONES's achievements are remarkable for a first-term Senator. I

was proud to work with him on his Military Widow's Tax Elimination Act, which helps ensure that nearly 70,000 surviving military spouses receive their full benefits, as he shepherded this important legislation through Congress. He has also passed legislation to expand insurance coverage for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments, helped his rural constituents navigate the healthcare system, and promoted justice for victims in unsolved criminal civil rights cases. I am proud to have worked with him on my legislation to expand workforce development programs and hands-on learning in high schools.

These incredible accomplishments demonstrate the hard work and dedication that Senator JONES brought to the Senate. He is a man with unwavering principles but a strong drive to find common ground and bring tangible benefits to the people of Alabama.

Senator JONES's legacy in the Senate is one I hope we can all remember as we look to work together for the betterment of our States and the Nation. It has been a privilege to work alongside him for the last 2 years, and I know he will continue to inspire us all as he begins the next chapter in his distinguished life.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, DOUG JONES and I came to the Senate at the same time—a class of just the two of us arriving in an off-year to fill partial terms. We were sworn in together on January 3, 2018, with each of us accompanied by a former Vice President—Walter Mondale in my case, Joe Biden in DOUG's. We shared the unique experience of arriving during an unprecedented period in the Senate's history, and I am fortunate to have spent the first 3 years of my Senate journey with a partner like DOUG by my side.

DOUG and I both joined the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, and we quickly found common cause in rural healthcare. Within months, DOUG had introduced the Rural Health Liaison Act, which helped to unify Federal resources to better support the health of rural communities. This act, which became law through our collaboration on the 2018 farm bill, put the government in a better position to respond to crises like the one we are experiencing today. The foresight and compassion DOUG displayed in leading this initiative were hallmarks of his time in the Senate. Whether he was working to lower the costs of higher education, helping me bring high-speed internet to rural areas, or passing legislation to support military spouses, I could always count on DOUG to be a voice for rural communities on the HELP Committee.

DOUG and I also sat next to each other on the Banking Committee, where I have appreciated his thoughtful focus on rectifying racial disparities in income and wealth, particularly those caused by Federal policies of the past. In addition, DOUG played a key role in leading a bipartisan effort to